

# Background Notes



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DISTRICT 0490  
Central New York  
Area 47

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## Anniversary Submission

Submit and Update Anniversaries by emailing :

backgroundnotes@yahoo.com

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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## FROM OUR NEWSLETTER CHAIR— The Hand of AA

“I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible. “ Here is another way to share your experience strength and hope. And I am asking for your help. Although not a direct interaction with an alcoholic in crisis, submitting your experience strength and hope in the News Letter may help another alcoholic. Whether you share your alcoholic journey into sobriety or share on a particular life event where the program has had positive effect in your life, submitting your experience strength and hope with the newsletter can have a practical effect on another recovering or struggling alcoholic. Like all things A.A., when helping or attempting to help another by sharing your personal experience it also has a practical effect on enhancing your sobriety. At least that has been my experience. It allows for self reflection on our journey and as we know writing is therapeutic. I have made an attempt to get others involved by directly asking people for submissions, but I do need material that I can stockpile so when the newsletter is being put together I don't have to scramble. I frequently find myself providing more of my personal experience than I would like. The newsletter and therefore the message of AA is rounded out by multiple people sharing distinct prospective on the recovery process. Here is how you can help: pick anything in your life that you can reflect on or are going through and write a 150—250 word submission to share your journey. Submit that at your convenience to **backgroundnotes@yahoo.com**. I will edit the submissions as I place them into the newsletter, then email you back prior to using them in an issue to give you a heads up. It's fun. It's pretty easy. It's therapeutic. Most of all it's another opportunity to pass the message on to our fellows. The person that you may help will likely be someone you know, it is a local(district) Newsletter. God Bless!! - Bob K.



## ***A Twisted Path***

My path to sobriety was this: I decided to quit drinking one weekend and buckle down for a while at work. I owned my own business so it wasn't like I wasn't putting in enough effort, 70-80 hrs a week physically working and every waking moment on managing - banking, accounting, planning, for the business. Often working while drinking. It didn't even register that what I was thinking of as buckling down was the beginning of being sick and tired of the extra effort an alcoholic has to put forth trying to function through hangovers, the fog of the drink, the physical toll that takes. So on Sunday I decide "maybe" I'll quit drinking for a while. The next Thursday night we had to go to one of the local bars to service the account. Thursdays are busy, usually one of my employees would do this. After not drinking several days during the busiest hours when I should be there to ensure it is going smoothly I tell them "I'll take care of the bar myself tonight!". I was sitting at the bar just starting my second beer and all of a sudden a moment of clarity hits me. 'Oh my God I am in trouble. I was not drinking because I like it, nor socially, or because I am relaxing, having fun, or any of that stuff! I am drinking because I have too!' I was devastated. So I called back to work and said "I'm tied up". I told my second to close that night and proceeded on to get snookered morosely trying to analyze this new tragedy! Shortly after day one of my employees who had been in AA asked me if I wanted to go to a meeting with him. I said yes. I listened to people talk about drinking the way I drank. They looked in much better shape than I was, they were laughing, and talking about living sober. I realized there was a solution that I couldn't bring about on self will. I immediately had Hope! I continued to drink after the revelation in spite of it. Over the course of the next 8 months periodically attending AA I was unable to stay sober. During this time period my journey included 2 rehabs, a few detoxes, the hell of guilt, remorse, and shame for not being able to plug in to AA. I had sold my business because by then. Having the knowledge that I was alcoholic while continuing to drink I progressed to where I was literally non functional. Guilt, remorse, fear, terror, bewilderment, and confusion kept me from getting up each morning to suit up and show up in spite of feeling like death warmed over as I had previously been able to! I was baffled!

After, I got sober and started working the steps, I could see why those 8 months happened. In spite of knowing of the solution, in spite of the hell, in spite of all evidence to the contrary that I couldn't drink....my character defects kept me from plugging into AA with my full heart and soul. Just one example of one of those defects: I would go to Thursday night meeting in my hometown. After a week or two people recognized me and would said hi and made me feel welcome. Being very social I would say hi and be friendly, enjoy the meeting, see hope, etc.. As soon as the meeting was over being a smoker, I would run outside and have a cigarette talking to the few smokers. After 10 minutes or so the non-smokers would shuffle out and start talking with the people who they saw every week, were working with, knew each other families. I would find myself standing behind listening for about 2 minutes getting anxious and uncomfortable. Now I know that anxiousness and uncomfortability was because I was no longer the focus or main part of the activity....2 minutes of discomfort is all I could stand, "see you later guys, I gotta go!". You see I was very friendly and social as long as I was the center of attention. I was very shallow. Alcohol had to beat some of these initial character defects out of me so I was desperate enough to say with sincerity "I need help from you guys and I don't know why I can't stay sober!, And mean it!!! I finally gave up because alcohol made me. But fortunately, it did that while I could see the solution! It would have been easier to jump in with both feet from the start! God however allowed the alcohol to bring me to a state of reasonableness.

Anonymous

## Inside Job

Instead of trying to figure out who "they" are so you can label them, how about trying to find out which one YOU are? It's so much easier for me to look at YOU and judge you, brand you and place you in some category of judgment, than it is to look at myself.

I am guilty of doing this all the time.

But when I turn the mirror back on myself, I get a reality check!

An ongoing, daily, honest and searching look at who I am, who I was and who I am becoming based on my actions, thoughts, and values, makes me realize that I have more than enough crap to surrender over to my HP and to keep myself busy for a lifetime.

An honest look at myself is difficult. My instincts rebel against it. I don't want to see my own flaws. I don't want to be wrong. I don't want to be what I really am, or see what harm I really cause others. I prefer to live in a fantasy world where I can judge others and be the only one doing this thing "right".

In the end, life has a way of knocking us all down to our "right size" as the 12 and 12 says. The ego gets deflated, or we get drunk. Simple as that.

The 12 steps tell me to continue to look for my own flaws and defects and continue to get honest about everyday life. I am shown through the steps that there is a Greater Power that can guide me through all of this to a better way of life. I am shown that I can repair even the worst of harms through consistent sobriety and honest effort and that I can have Peace.

My experience is that when I spend more time looking at me than at you, I find more peace, even though I don't like what I see because I am looking at the only thing that I have any real power to change in this world....Me!

So, today I am going to try to look for my own flaws, rather than the flaws in others. Today I am going to try to be helpful rather than hurtful. Wish me luck!

Kevin D.



**I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is, the judge ruled court orderd AA is inhumane. The bad news is, he reduced your sentence to waterboarding.**

## Spiritual Corner

Did you know there is also a seventh step prayer used as an example in the big book? Here it is:

*My creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that You now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to You and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go from here t do Your bidding.\**

This as is in the third step prayer is just an example of what worked for many. Obviously it is just a suggestion because nature of the concept towards a "Higher Power as you understand him". What strikes me as significant is the verbage, "**..have all of me, the good and bad.**" and "**..every single character defect..**" It certainly is a good example of the completeness required this step should entail.

*\*Alcoholic Anonymous Pg. 76*

**District News and Events**

June 15, 2016 – MV Alano Club Pot Luck dinner and meeting.- 6pm Dinner, 7pm meeting. 122 Cottage Pl. Utica NY.

June 25, 2016– Monthly Speaker Meeting - Sunday 8pm Untied Methodist Church - Main & Grove St. Oneida, NY

July 29-31– NY State Information Workshop—Canisius College Campus -Buffalo, NY.-Registration only \$15, Registration/Saturday Dinner \$27, Registration w/all Meals \$70. Hotel space available. Info on flyer and online at [NWIS.org](http://NWIS.org)

<b>Anniversaries</b>					
Name	## Years	Home Group	Name	## Years	Home Group
Ellen R.	28	Nooners-Oneida M-F	Mike M.	1	Hole in the Donut

<b>District 0490</b>		<b>HOTLINE NUMBERS</b>	
PO Box 481	Next District Meeting:	Oneida	315-533-1227
Oneida, NY 13421	June 19, 2:00pm	Rome	315-201-6644
Email: <a href="mailto:district0490@yahoo.com">district0490@yahoo.com</a>	Oneida Rec. Center	Utica	315-732-6880
Website: <a href="http://www.aadistrict0490.org">www.aadistrict0490.org</a>	217 Cedar St, Oneida, NY	Syracuse	315-463-5011

<b>Area 47</b>		<b>Alcoholic Anonymous World Svc.</b>	
CNY Area Committee Registrar	Next Area Assembly:	Grand Central Station	
PO Box 18063	June 12, 1:00	Box 459, New York 10163	
Rochester, NY 14615	TBA	Website: <a href="http://www.aa.org">www.aa.org</a>	
Website: <a href="http://www.aacny.org">www.aacny.org</a>	visit website for details		

This newsletter is a service of and publication of District 0490, Central New York, Area 47 of Alcoholics Anonymous. Background Notes is not endorsed nor approved by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. or Central New York Area 47. The purpose of this newsletter is to reach out to the alcoholic who still suffers, provide information to the AA Community, and general information to the public about AA's program of recovery. The views expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services Inc, CNY Area 47, or District 0490.